

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SAB-01 L-03 OPR-02 A-01 SSO-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5228

INFO PANCANAL

USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: PROTEST TO GOP REGARDING DEMONSTRATION AT EMBASSY

FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF FIRST PERSON NOTE DELIVERED TO PANAMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER PROTESTING GOP FAILURE TO PROTECT EMBASSY PREMISES AND PROPERTY FROM DAMAGE RESULTING FROM VIOLENT DEMONSTRATION ON MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 23, AND REQUESTING RESTITUTION FOR DAMAGES. GOP HAS NOT, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, PUBLICIZED FULL TEXT OF PROTEST, AND FOR THIS REASON WE DO NOT RECOMMEND THAT US DO SO.

BEGIN QUOTE NO. 105 PANAMA, SEPTEMBER 23, 1975

"EXCELLENCY

"AS YOUR EXCELLENCY MAY BE AWARE, THE CHANCERY BUILDING OF THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA WAS THE SCENE OF A VIOLENT STUDENT DEMONSTRATION ON THIS MORNING, SEPTEMBER 23, 1975. THE VIOLENCE BEGAN AT ABOUT 10:20 A.M., SHORTLY AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF THE STUDENT GROUP AT THE CHANCERY. DURING THE FOLLOWING APPROXIMATELY ONE-HALF HOUR, THE EMBASSY WAS THE TARGET OF A CONSTANT BARRAGE OF ROCKS, AND AT LEAST TWO GASOLINE BOMBS OF THE TYPE KNOWN AS "MOLOTOV COCKTAILS", ONE OF

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WHICH BURNED AT THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING.

"TWO HUNDRED SEVENTY-EIGHT WINDOW PANES, OF VARYING SIZES, ON ALL FLOORS OF THE CHANCERY BUILDING, WERE BROKEN DURING THIS INCIDENT, ALONG WITH NUMEROUS INTERNAL GLASS DOORS AND PARTITIONS. SOME ITEMS OF OFFICE EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE WERE DAMAGED. AT LEAST FIVE VEHICLES, SOME THE PROPERTY OF THE EMBASSY AND OTHERS OF ITS EMPLOYEES, BOTH PANAMANIAN AND AMERICAN, SUFFERED BROKEN WINDOWS AND OTHER DAMAGE. TWO OF THESE CARS SUFFERED EXTENSIVE DAMAGE. WE CONSIDER IT ONLY GOOD FORTUNE THAT NONE OF THE EMBASSY'S PANAMANIAN AND AMERICAN STAFF, ALL OF WHOM WERE INSIDE THE BUILDING THROUGHOUT THIS EVENT, WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED.

"ALTHOUGH MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD WERE PRESENT THROUGHOUT, WE NOTED NO EFFORT BY THEM DURING THIS HALF-HOUR PERIOD TO STOP THE VIOLENCE WHICH WAS CAUSING SUCH EXTENSIVE DAMAGE. THE DEMONSTRATION WAS FINALLY BROKEN UP THROUGH USE OF TEAR GAS BY THE NATIONAL GUARD ONLY AFTER THE DAMAGE HAD BEEN DONE.

"I PROTEST IN STRONG TERMS, EXCELLENCY, THE FAILURE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA TO PROVIDE IN A TIMELY MANNER PROTECTION WHICH WAS PROPER AND SUFFICIENT TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO THE CHANCERY PREMISES AND ITS PROPERTY, AND THAT OF ITS EMPLOYEES. THIS FAILURE, AND THE CONSEQUENT EXTENSIVE DAMAGE, CAN HARDLY FAIL TO BE TAKEN AS A PUBLIC INDICATION OF THE INABILITY, OR THE UNWILLINGNESS, OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA TO TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF THE DIPLOMATIC PREMISES OF A FRIENDLY FOREIGN GOVERNMENT. AS SUCH, IT CAN DO NOTHING TO ASSIST RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

"I WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE RECEIVING YOUR EXCELLENCY'S ASSURANCES THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA WILL NOT PERMIT SUCH INCIDENTS TO RECUR, AND THAT IT WILL MAKE PROMPT AND APPROPRIATE RESTITUTION FOR DAMAGES TO THE CHANCERY PREMISES AND PROPERTY AND TO THE PROPERTY OF ITS STAFF MEMBERS.

"ACCEPT EXCELLENCY, THE RENEWED ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

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"HIS EXCELLENCY

"DOCTOR CARLOS OZORES TYPALDOS,

"MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS,

"PANAMA. END QUOTE.

JORDEN

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